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AN

EPISTLE

TO

WILLIAM HOGARTH.

Price Two Shillings and Sixpence.

BRITISH MUSEUM

AN

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TO

WILLIAM HOGARTH.

By C. CHURCHILL.

Ut Pictura, Poesis. HOR.

LONDON:

Printed for the AUTHOR,

And sold by J. COOTE, at the KING'S ARMS in PATER-NOSTER-ROW.

M.DCC.LXIII.

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TO

William Hogarth.

AMongſt the ſons of men how few are known
Who dare be juſt to merit not their own!
Superior virtue and ſuperior ſenſe
To knayes and fools will always give offence;
Nay, men of real worth can ſcarcely bear,
So nice is Jealouſy, a rival there.

Be wicked as thou wilt, do all that's baſe,
Proclaim thyſelf the monſter of thy race;

Let Vice and Folly thy black Soul divide,
Be proud with meanneſs, and be mean with pride;
Deaf to the voice of Faith and Honour, fall
From ſide to ſide, yet be of none at all;
Spurn all thoſe charities, thoſe ſacred ties,
Which Nature in her bounty, good as wiſe,
To work our ſafety, and enſure her plan,
Contriv'd to bind, and rivet man to man;
Lift againſt Virtue Pow'r's oppreſſive rod,
Betray thy Country, and deny thy God;
And, in one gen'ral comprehenſive line,
To group, which volumes ſcarcely could define,
Whate'er of Sin and Dulneſs can be ſaid,
Join to a F----'s heart a D----'s head,
Yet may'ſt thou paſs unnotic'd in the throng,
And, free from Envy, ſafely ſneak along.
The rigid Saint, by whom no mercy's ſhewn
To Saints whoſe lives are better than his own,
Shall ſpare thy crimes, and WIT, who never once
Forgave a Brother, ſhall forgive a Dunce.

BUT ſhould thy ſoul, form'd in ſome luckleſs hour;
Vile Int'reſt ſcorn, nor madly graſp at Pow'r;

Should Love of Fame, in ev'ry noble mind
A brave diſeaſe, with love of Virtue join'd,
Spur thee to deeds of pith, where Courage tried
In Reaſon's court is amply juſtified;
Or, fond of knowledge and averſe to ſtrife,
Should'ſt Thou prefer the calmer walk of life;
Should'ſt Thou, by pale and ſickly STUDY led,
Purſue coy Science to the Fountain head;
Virtue thy guide, and Public Good thy end,
Should ev'ry thought to our improvement tend,
To curb the paſſions, to enlarge the mind,
Purge the ſick weal, and humanize mankind:
Rage in her eye, and Malice in her breaſt,
Redoubled Horror grinning on her creſt,
Fiercer each ſnake, and ſharper ev'ry dart,
Quick from her cell ſhall madd'ning ENVY ſtart.
Then ſhalt Thou find, but find alas! too late,
How vain is worth! how ſhort is Glory's date!
Then ſhalt Thou find, whilſt Friends with Foes conſpire
To give more proof than Virtue would deſire,
Thy danger chiefly lies in acting well;
No crime's ſo great as daring to excell.

WHILST

WHILST SATIRE thus, diſdaining mean controul,
Urg'd the free dictates of an honeſt ſoul,
CANDOUR, who with the charity of *Paul*,
Still thinks the beſt, where'er ſhe thinks at all,
With the ſweet milk of human kindneſs bleſs'd,
The furious ardour of my zeal repreſs'd.

CANS'T Thou, with more than uſual warmth, ſhe cry'd,
Thy malice to indulge, and feed thy pride,
Can'ſt Thou, ſevere by Nature as Thou art,
With all that wond'rous rancour in thy heart,
Delight to torture Truth ten thouſand ways,
To ſpin detraction forth from themes of praiſe,
To make VICE fit, for purpoſes of ſtrife,
And draw the Hag much larger than the life,
To make the good ſeem bad, the bad ſeem worſe,
And repreſent our Nature as our curſe?

DOTH not humanity condemn that zeal
Which tends to aggravate and not to heal?
Doth not diſcretion warn thee of diſgrace,
And danger grinning ſtare thee in the face?
Loud as the Drum, which ſpreading terrour round
From emptineſs acquires the pow'r of ſound,

Doth

Doth not the voice of NORTON ſtrike thy ear,
And the pale MANSFIELD chill thy ſoul with fear?
Do'ſt Thou, fond man, believe thyſelf ſecure,
Becauſe Thou'rt honeſt, and becauſe Thou'rt poor?
Do'ſt Thou on Law and Liberty depend?
Turn, turn thy eyes, and view thy injur'd friend.
Art Thou beyond the ruffian gripe of Pow'r,
When WILKES, *prejudg'd*, is ſentenc'd to the Tow'r?
Do'ſt Thou by Privilege exemption claim,
When Privilege is little more than name?
Or to Prerogative (that glorious ground
On which State-ſcoundrels oft have ſafety found)
Doſt Thou pretend, and there a ſanction find,
Unpuniſh'd, thus to Libel human kind?

WHEN Poverty, the Poet's conſtant crime,
Compell'd thee, all unfit, to trade in rime,
Had not Romantic notions turn'd thy head,
Had'ſt Thou not valued Honour more than bread,
Had Int'reſt, pliant Int'reſt been thy guide,
And had not Prudence been debauch'd by Pride,
In flatt'ry's ſtream Thou would'ſt have dipp'd thy pen,
Applied to great, and not to honeſt men,

Nor ſhould Conviction have ſeduc'd thy heart
To take the weaker, tho' the better part.

WHAT but rank Folly, for thy curſe decreed,
Could into SATIRE's barren path miſlead,
When, open to thy view, before thee lay
Soul-ſoothing PANEGYRIC's flow'ry way?
There might the Muſe have ſaunter'd at her eaſe,
And, pleaſing others, learn'd herſelf to pleaſe,
Lords ſhould have liſten'd to the ſugar'd treat,
And *Ladies*, ſimp'ring, own'd it vaſtly ſweet;
Rogues, in thy prudent verſe with virtue grac'd,
Fools, mark'd by thee as prodigies of Taſte,
Muſt have forbid, pouring preferments down,
Such Wit, ſuch Truth as thine to quit the gown.
Thy ſacred Brethren too (for they, no leſs
Than Laymen, bring their off'rings to Succeſs)
Had hail'd Thee good if great, and paid the vow
Sincere as that they pay to God, whilſt Thou
In *Lawn* hadſt whiſper'd to a ſleeping croud,
As dull as R---, and half as proud.

PEACE, CANDOUR—wiſely had'ſt thou ſaid, and well,
Could Int'reſt in this breaſt one moment dwell,

Could

Could ſhe, with proſpect of ſucceſs, oppoſe
The firm reſolves, which from Conviction roſe:
I cannot truckle to a Fool of State,
Nor take a favour from the man I hate.
Free leave have others by ſuch means to ſhine;
I ſcorn their practice, they may laugh at mine.

But in this charge, forgetful of thyſelf,
Thou haſt aſſum'd the maxims of that Elf,
Whom God in wrath for man's diſhonour fram'd,
Cunning in Heav'n, amongſt us Prudence nam'd,
That *ſervile* Prudence, which I leave to thoſe
Who dare not be my Friends, can't be my Foes.

Had I, with cruel and oppreſſive rimes,
Purſued, and turn'd misfortunes into crimes;
Had I, when Virtue gaſping lay and low,
Join'd tyrant Vice, and added woe to woe;
Had I made Modeſty in bluſhes ſpeak,
And drawn the tear down Beauty's ſacred cheek;
Had I (damn'd then) in thought debas'd my lays,
To wound that Sex, which Honour bids me praiſe;
Had I, from vengeance by baſe views betray'd,
In endleſs night ſunk injur'd Ayliff's ſhade;

Had

Had I (which Satirists of mighty name,
Renown'd in rime, rever'd for *moral* fame,
Have done before, whom Juſtice ſhall purſue
In future verſe) brought forth to public view
A Noble Friend, and made his foibles known,
Becauſe his worth was greater than my own;
Had I ſpar'd thoſe (ſo *Prudence* had decreed)
Whom, God ſo help me at my greateſt need,
I ne'er will ſpare, thoſe vipers to their King
Who ſmooth their looks, and flatter whilſt they ſting,
Or had I not taught patriot zeal to boaſt
Of Thoſe, who flatter leaſt, but love him moſt;
Had I thus ſinn'd, my ſtubborn ſoul ſhould bend
At CANDOUR's voice, and take, as from a friend,
The deep rebuke; Myſelf ſhould be the firſt
To hate myſelf, and ſtamp my Muſe accurs'd.

BUT ſhall my arm---forbid it manly Pride,
Forbid it Reaſon, warring on my ſide---
For vengeance lifted high, the ſtroke forbear,
And hang ſuſpended in the deſart air,
Or to my trembling ſide unnerv'd ſink down,
Palſied, forſooth, by CANDOUR's half-made frown?

When

When Juſtice bids me on, ſhall I delay
Becauſe inſipid CANDOUR bars my way?
When ſhe, of all alike the puling friend,
Would diſappoint my Satire's nobleſt end,
When ſhe to villains would a ſanction give,
And ſhelter thoſe who are not fit to live,
When ſhe would ſcreen the guilty from a bluſh,
And bids me ſpare whom Reaſon bids me cruſh,
All leagues with CANDOUR proudly I reſign;
She cannot be for Honour's turn, nor mine.

YET come, cold monitor, half foe, half friend,
Whom Vice can't fear, whom Virtue can't commend,
Come CANDOUR, by thy dull indiff'rence known,
Thou equal-blooded judge, Thou lukewarm drone,
Who, faſhion'd without feelings, doſt expect
We call that Virtue, which we know Defect,
Come, and obſerve the Nature of our crimes,
The groſs and rank complexion of the times,
Obſerve it well, and then review my plan;
Praiſe if you will, or cenſure if you can.

WHILST Vice preſumptuous lords it as in ſport,
And Piety is only known at Court;

Whilſt wretched LIBERTY expiring lies
Beneath the fatal burthen of EXCISE;
Whilſt nobles act, without one touch of ſhame,
What men of humble rank would bluſh to name;
Whilſt Honour's plac'd in higheſt point of view,
Worſhipp'd by thoſe, who Juſtice never knew;
Whilſt Bubbles of Diſtinction waſte in play
The hours of reſt, and blunder thro' the day,
With dice and cards opprobrious vigils keep,
Then turn to ruin empires in their ſleep;
Whilſt Fathers, by relentleſs paſſion led,
Doom worthy injur'd ſons to beg their bread,
Merely with ill-got, ill-ſav'd wealth to grace
An alien, abject, poor, proud, upſtart race;
Whilſt MARTIN flatters only to betray,
And WEBB gives up his dirty ſoul for pay;
Whilſt titles ſerve to huſh a villain's fears;
Whilſt Peers are Agents made, and Agents Peers;
Whilſt baſe betrayers are themſelves betray'd,
And makers ruin'd by the thing they made;
Whilſt C---, falſe to God and man, for gold,
Like the old traitor who a Saviour ſold,
To Shame his Maſter, Friend, and Father gives;
Whilſt BUTE remains in POW'R, whilſt HOLLAND lives;

Can Satire want a ſubject, where Diſdain
By Virtue fir'd may point her ſharpeſt ſtrain,
Where, cloath'd with thunder, Truth may roll along,
And CANDOUR juſtify the rage of ſong?

SUCH Things, ſuch Men before Thee, ſuch an Age,
Where Rancour, great as thine, may glut her rage,
And ſicken e'en to ſurfeit, where the pride
Of Satire, pouring down in fulleſt tide,
May ſpread wide vengeance round, yet all the while
Juſtice behold the ruin with a ſmile,
Whilſt I, thy foe miſdeem'd, cannot condemn,
Nor diſapprove that rage I wiſh to ſtem,
Wilt thou, degen'rate and corrupted, chuſe
To ſoil the credit of thy haughty Muſe,
With Fallacy, moſt infamous, to ſtain
Her Truth, and render all her anger vain?
When I beheld Thee incorrect but bold,
A various comment on the Stage unfold;
When Play'rs on Play'rs before thy ſatire fell,
And poor Reviews conſpir'd thy wrath to ſwell;
When States and Stateſmen next became thy care,
And only kings were ſafe if thou waſt there;

Thy

Thy ev'ry word I weigh'd in Judgment's ſcale,
And in thy ev'ry word found Truth prevail.
Why do'ſt Thou now to Falſhood meanly fly?
Not even CANDOUR can forgive a lie.

BAD as Men are, why ſhould thy frantic rimes
Traffick in Slander, and invent new crimes,
Crimes which, exiſting only in thy mind,
Weak Spleen brings forth to blacken all Mankind.
By pleaſing hopes we lure the human heart
To practiſe Virtue, and improve in Art;
To thwart theſe ends (which proud of honeſt Fame
A noble Muſe would cheriſh and inflame)
Thy *Drudge* contrives, and in our full career
Sicklies our hopes with the pale hue of Fear;
Tells us that all our labours are in vain,
That what we ſeek, we never can obtain,
That, dead to Virtue, loſt to Nature's plan,
ENVY poſſeſſes the whole race of man,
That Worth is criminal, and Danger lies,
Danger extreme, in being good and wiſe.

'TIS a rank falſhood; ſearch the world around,
There cannot be ſo vile a monſter found

Not one, ſo vile, on whom ſuſpicions fall
Of that groſs guilt, which you impute to all,
Approv'd by thoſe who diſobey her laws,
Virtue from Vice itſelf extorts applauſe.
Her very foes bear witneſs to her ſtate;
They will not love her, but they cannot hate.
Hate Virtue for herſelf, with ſpite purſue
Merit for Merit's ſake! might this be true,
I would renounce my Nature with diſdain,
And with the beaſts that periſh graze the plain.
Might this be true, had we ſo far fill'd up
The meaſure of our crimes, and from the cup
Of guilt ſo deeply drank, as not to find,
Thirſting for ſin, one drop, one dreg behind,
Quick ruin muſt involve this flaming ball,
And Providence in Juſtice cruſh us all.
None but the damn'd, and amongſt them the worſt,
Thoſe who for double guilt are doubly curs'd,
Can be ſo loſt; nor can the worſt of all
At once into ſuch deep damnation fall;
By painful ſlow degrees they reach this crime,
Which e'en in Hell muſt be a work of time.

Ceaſe then thy guilty rage, thou wayward ſon,
With the foul gall of diſcontent o'er run,
Liſt to my voice—be honeſt, if you can,
Nor ſlander Nature in her fav'rite man:
But if thy ſpirit, reſolute in ill,
Once having err'd, perſiſts in error ſtill,
Go on at large, no longer worth my care,
And freely vent thoſe blaſphemies in air,
Which I would ſtamp as falſe, tho' on the tongue
Of Angels, the injurious ſlander hung.

Dup'd by thy vanity (that cunning elf
Who ſnares the Coxcomb to deceive himſelf)
Or blinded by thy rage, did'ſt Thou believe
That We too, coolly, would ourſelves deceive,
That We, as ſterling, falſhood would admit,
Becauſe 'twas ſeaſon'd with ſome little wit?
When Fiction riſes pleaſing to the eye,
Men will believe, becauſe they love the lie;
But Truth herſelf, if clouded with a frown,
Muſt have ſome ſolemn proof to paſs her down.
Haſt Thou, maintaining that which muſt diſgrace
And bring into contempt the human race,

Haſt Thou, or can'ſt Thou, in Truth's ſacred court,
To ſave thy credit, and thy cauſe ſupport,
Produce one proof, make out one real ground
On which ſo great, ſo groſs a charge to found?
Nay, doſt Thou know one man (let that appear,
From wilful falſhood I'll proclaim thee clear)
One man ſo loſt, to Nature ſo untrue,
From whom this gen'ral charge thy raſhneſs drew?
On this foundation ſhalt thou ſtand or fall—
Prove that in One, which you have charg'd on All.
Reaſon determines, and it muſt be done;
'Mongſt men, or paſt, or preſent, name me One.

HOGARTH----I take thee, CANDOUR, at thy word,
Accept thy proffer'd terms, and will be heard;
Thee have I heard with virulence declaim,
Nothing retain'd of Candour but the name;
By Thee have I been charg'd in angry ſtrains
With that mean falſhood which my ſoul diſdains----
HOGARTH ſtand forth---Nay hang not thus aloof----
Now, CANDOUR, now Thou ſhall receive ſuch proof,
Such damning proof, that henceforth Thou ſhalt fear
To tax my wrath, and own my conduct clear----

HOGARTH

HOGARTH ſtand forth---I dare thee to be tried,
In that great Court, where Conſcience muſt preſide;
At that moſt ſolemn bar hold up thy hand;
Think before whom on what account you ſtand----
Speak, but conſider well---from firſt to laſt
Review thy life, weigh ev'ry action paſt---
Nay, you ſhall have no reaſon to complain---
Take longer time, and view them o'er again---
Canſt Thou remember from thy earlieſt youth,
And as thy God muſt judge Thee, ſpeak the truth,
A ſingle inſtance where, *Self* laid aſide,
And Juſtice taking place of fear and pride,
Thou with an equal eye did'ſt GENIUS view,
And give to Merit what was Merit's due?
Genius and Merit are a ſure offence,
And thy Soul ſickens at the name of Senſe?
Is any one ſo fooliſh to ſucceed,
On ENVY's altar he is doom'd to bleed?
HOGARTH, a guilty pleaſure in his eyes,
The place of Executioner ſupplies.
See how he glotes, enjoys the ſacred feaſt,
And proves himſelf by cruelty a prieſt.

WHILST

Whilst the weak Artist, to thy whims a slave,
Would bury all those pow'rs which Nature gave,
Would suffer blank concealment to obscure
Those rays, thy Jealousy could not endure,
To feed thy vanity would rust unknown,
And to secure thy credit blast his own,
In Hogarth he was sure to find a friend;
He could not fear, and therefore might commend.
But when his Spirit, rous'd by honest Shame,
Shook off that Lethargy, and fear'd to Fame,
When, with the pride of Man, resolv'd and strong,
He scorn'd those fears which did his Honour wrong,
And, on himself determin'd to rely,
Brought forth his labours to the public eye,
No Friend, in Thee, could such a Rebel know;
He had desert, and Hogarth was his foe.

Souls of a timorous daft, of petty name
In Envy's court, not yet quite dead to shame,
May some remorse, some qualms of Conscience feel,
And suffer Honour to abate their Zeal,
But the Man, truly and compleatly great,
Allows no rule of action but his hate;

When

Thro' ev'ry bar the bravely breaks his way;
Paſſion his Principle, and Parts his prey.
Mediums in Vice and Virtue ſpeak a mind
Within the pale of Temperance confin'd;
The daring Spirit ſcorns her narrow ſchemes,
And, good or bad, is always in extremes.

Man's practice duly weigh'd, thro' ev'ry age
On the ſame plan hath Envy form'd her rage.
'Gainſt thoſe whom Fortune hath our rivals made
In way of Science, and in way of Trade,
Stung with mean jealouſy ſhe aims her ſpite,
Firſt works, then views their ruin with delight.
Our Hogarth here a grand improver ſhines,
And nobly on the general plan refines;
He, like himſelf, o'erleaps the ſervile bound,
Worth is his mark, wherever Worth is found.
Should Painters only his quick wrath ſuffice?
Genius in ev'ry walk is lawful Prize.
'Tis a groſs inſult to his o'ergrown ſtate;
His love to merit is to feel his hate.

When Wilkes, our Countryman, our common friend,
Arose his King, his Country to defend,

When

When tools of pow'r he bar'd to public view,
And from their holes the ſneaking cowards drew,
When Rancour found it far beyond her reach
To ſoil his honour, and his truth impeach,
What could induce Thee, at a time and place,
Where manly Foes had bluſh'd to ſhew their face,
To make that effort, which muſt damn thy name,
And ſink Thee deep, deep in thy grave with ſhame?
Did Virtue move Thee? no, 'twas Pride, rank Pride,
And if Thou had'ſt not done it, Thou had'ſt dy'd.
Malice (who, diſappointed of her end,
Whether to work the bane of Foe or Friend,
Preys on herſelf, and, driven to the Stake,
Gives Virtue that revenge ſhe ſcorns to take)
Had kill'd Thee, tott'ring on life's utmoſt verge,
Had Wilkes and Liberty eſcap'd thy ſcourge.

When that great Charter, which our Fathers bought
With their beſt blood, was into queſtion brought;
When, big with ruin, o'er each Engliſh head
Vile Slav'ry hung ſuſpended by a thread;
When Liberty, all trembling and aghaſt,
Fear'd for the future, knowing what was paſt;

When

When ev'ry breaſt was chill'd with deep deſpair,
Till Reaſon pointed out that PRATT was there;
Lurking, moſt Ruffian-like, behind a ſcreen,
So plac'd all things to ſee, himſelf unſeen;
VIRTUE, with due contempt, ſaw HOGARTH ſtand,
The murd'rous pencil in his palſied hand.
What was the cauſe of Liberty to him,
Or what was Honour? let them ſink or ſwim,
So he may gratify without controul
The mean reſentments of his ſelfiſh ſoul.
Let Freedom periſh, if, to Freedom true,
In the ſame ruin WILKES may periſh too.

WITH all the ſymptoms of aſſur'd decay,
With age and ſickneſs pinch'd, and worn away;
Pale quiv'ring lips, lank cheeks, and falt'ring tongue,
The Spirits out of tune, the Nerves unſtrung,
Thy Body ſhrivell'd up, thy dim eyes ſunk
Within their ſockets deep, thy weak hams ſhrunk
The body's weight unable to ſuſtain,
The ſtream of life ſcarce trembling thro' the vein,
More than half-kill'd by honeſt truths, which fell,
Thro' thy own fault, from men who wiſh'd thee well,

Can-

Can'ſt thou, e'en thus, thy thoughts to vengeance give,
And, dead to all things elſe, to Malice live?
Hence, Dotard, to thy cloſet, ſhut thee in,
By deep repentance waſh away thy ſin;
From haunts of men to ſhame and ſorrow fly,
And, on the verge of death, learn how to die.

VAIN exhortation! waſh the Ethiop white,
Diſcharge the leopard's ſpots, turn day to night,
Controul the courſe of Nature, bid the deep
Huſh at thy Pygmy voice her waves to ſleep,
Perform things paſſing ſtrange, yet own thy art
Too weak to work a change in ſuch a heart.
That ENVY which was woven in the frame
At firſt, will to the laſt remain the ſame.
Reaſon may droop, may die, but Envy's rage
Improves by time, and gathers ſtrength from age.
Some, and not few, vain triflers with the pen,
Unread, unpractis'd in the ways of men,
Tell us that ENVY, who with giant ſtride
Stalks thro' the vale of life by Virtue's ſide,
Retreats when ſhe hath drawn her lateſt breath,
And calmly hears her praiſes after death.

To ſuch obſervers HOGARTH gives the lie;
Worth may be heard, but Envy cannot die;
Within the manſion of his gloomy breaſt,
A manſion ſuited well to ſuch a gueſt;
Immortal, unimpair'd ſhe rears her head,
And damns alike the living and the dead.

OFT have I known Thee, HOGARTH, weak and vain,
Thyſelf the idol of thy awkward ſtrain,
Thro' the dull meaſure of a ſummer's day,
In phraſe moſt vile, prate long long hours away,
Whilſt Friends with Friends all gaping ſit, and gaze,
To hear a HOGARTH babble HOGARTH's praiſe.
But if athwart thee Interruption came,
And mention'd with reſpect ſome Ancient's name,
Some Ancient's name, who in the days of yore
The crown of Art with greateſt honour wore,
How have I ſeen thy coward cheek turn pale,
And blank confuſion ſeize thy mangled tale?
How hath thy Jealouſy to madneſs grown,
And deem'd his praiſe injurious to thy own?
Then without mercy did thy wrath make way,
And Arts and Artiſts all became thy prey;

Then

Then did'ſt Thou trample on eſtabliſh'd rules,
And proudly levell'd all the antient ſchools,
Condemn'd thoſe works, with praiſe thro' ages grac'd,
Which you had never ſeen, or could not taſte.
" But would mankind have true Perfection ſhewn,
" It muſt be found in labours of my own.
" I dare to challenge in one ſingle piece,
" Th' united force of ITALY and GREECE."
Thy eager hand the curtain then undrew,
And brought the boaſted Maſter-piece to view.
Spare thy remarks—ſay not a ſingle word—
The Picture ſeen, why is the Painter heard?
Call not up Shame and Anger in our cheeks;
Without a Comment SIGISMUNDA ſpeaks.

POOR SIGISMUNDA! what a Fate is thine!
DRYDEN, the great High Prieſt of all the Nine,
Reviv'd thy name, gave what a Muſe could give,
And in his Numbers bad thy Mem'ry live;
Gave thee thoſe ſoft ſenſations, which might move
And warm the coldeſt Anchorite to Love;
Gave thee that Virtue, which could curb deſire,
Refine and conſecrate Love's headſtrong fire;

Gave

Gave thee thoſe griefs, which made the Stoic feel,
And call'd compaſſion forth from hearts of ſteel;
Gave thee that firmneſs, which our Sex may ſhame,
And made Man bow to Woman's juſter claim,
So that our tears, which from Compaſſion flow,
Seem to debaſe thy dignity of woe.
But O, how much unlike! how fall'n! how chang'd!
How much from Nature, and herſelf eſtrang'd!
How totally depriv'd of all the pow'rs
To ſhew her feelings, and awaken ours;
Doth SIGISMUNDA now devoted ſtand,
The helpleſs victim of a Dauber's hand.

But why, *my* HOGARTH, ſuch a progreſs made,
So rare a Pattern for the Sign-Poſt trade,
In the full force, and whirlwind of thy pride,
Why was *Heroic* Painting laid aſide?
Why is It not reſum'd? thy Friends at Court,
Men all in place and pow'r, crave thy ſupport;
Be grateful then for once, and, thro' thy Field
Of Politics, thy *Epic* Pencil wield,
Maintain the cauſe, which they, good lack! avow,
And would maintain too, but they know not how.

Thro'

Thro' ev'ry *Panel* let thy Virtue tell
How BUTE prevail'd, How PITT and TEMPLE fell!
How ENGLAND's ſons (whom They conſpir'd to bleſs
Againſt our Will, with inſolent ſucceſs)
Approve their fall, and with addreſſes run,
How got, God knows, to hail the SCOTTISH Sun;
Point out our fame in war, when vengeance, hurl'd
From the ſtrong arm of Juſtice, ſhook the world;
Thine, and thy Country's honour to encreaſe
Point out the honours of ſucceeding Peace;
Our *Moderation*, Chriſtian-like, diſplay,
Shew, what we got, and what we gave away.
In Colours, dull and heavy as the tale,
Let a *State*-Chaos thro' the whole prevail.

BUT, of events regardleſs, whilſt the Muſe
Perhaps with too much heat her theme purſues;
While her quick Spirits rouze at FREEDOM's call,
And ev'ry drop of blood is turn'd to gall,
Whilſt a dear Country, and an injur'd Friend,
Urge my ſtrong anger to the bitt'reſt end,
Whilſt honeſt trophies to revenge are rais'd,
Let not One real Virtue paſs unprais'd.

Juſtice with equal courſe bids Satire flow,
And loves the Virtue of her greateſt foe.

O! that I here could that rare Virtue mean
Which ſcorns the rule of Envy, Pride and Spleen,
Which ſprings not from the labour'd Works of Art,
But hath its riſe from Nature in the heart,
Which in itſelf with happineſs is crown'd,
And ſpreads with joy the bleſſing all around!
But Truth forbids, and in theſe ſimple lays,
Contented with a diff'rent kind of Praiſe,
Muſt HOGARTH ſtand; that Praiſe which GENIUS gives,
In Which to lateſt time the *Artiſt* lives,
But not the *Man*; which, rightly underſtood,
May make Us great, but cannot make us good.
That Praiſe be HOGARTH's; freely let him wear
That Wreath which GENIUS wove, and planted there.
Foe as I am, ſhould Envy tear it down,
Myſelf would labour to replace the Crown.

IN walks of Humor, in that caſt of Style,
Which, probing to the quick, yet makes us ſmile;
In Comedy, thy nat'ral road to fame,
Nor let me call it by a meaner name,

Where

Where a beginning, middle, and an end
Are aptly joined; where parts on parts depend,
Each made for each, as bodies for their ſoul,
So as to form one true and perfect whole,
Where a plain ſtory to the eye is told,
Which we conceive the moment we behold,
HOGARTH unrivall'd ſtands, and ſhall engage
Unrivall'd praiſe to the moſt diſtant age.

How could'ſt Thou then to Shame perverſely run,
And tread that path which Nature bad Thee ſhun,
Why did ambition overleap her rules,
And thy vaſt parts become the ſport of Fools?
By diff'rent methods diff'rent Men excell,
But where is He, who can do all things well?
Humour thy Province, for ſome monſtrous crime
Pride ſtruck Thee with the frenzy of *Sublime*.
But, when the work was finiſh'd, could thy mind
So partial be, and to herſelf ſo blind,
What with contempt All view'd, to view with awe,
Nor ſee thoſe faults which ev'ry Blockhead ſaw?
Bluſh, Thou vain Man, and if deſire of Fame,
Founded on real Art, thy thoughts inflame,

To quick deſtruction SHAKSPEAR gives,
And let her mem'ry die, that thine may live.

BUT ſhould fond Candour, for her Mercy ſake,
With pity view, and pardon this miſtake;
Or ſhould Oblivion, to thy wiſh moſt kind,
Wipe off that ſtain, nor leave one trace behind;
Of ARTS *deſpis'd*, of ARTISTS by thy frown
Aw'd from juſt hopes, of *riſing Worth kept down*,
Of all thy meanneſs thro' this mortal race,
Can'ſt Thou the living memory eraſe,
Or ſhall not Vengeance follow to the grave,
And give back juſt that meaſure which You gave?
With ſo much merit, and ſo much ſucceſs,
With ſo much pow'r to curſe, ſo much to bleſs,
Would He have been Man's friend, inſtead of foe,
HOGARTH had been a little God below.
Why then, like ſavage Giants, fam'd of old,
Of whom in Scripture Story we are told,
Doſt Thou in cruelty that ſtrength employ,
Which Nature meant to ſave, not to deſtroy,
Why doſt Thou, all in horrid pomp array'd,
Sit grinning o'er the ruins Thou haſt made?

Moſt

Moſt rank Ill-nature muſt applaud thy art;
But even Candour muſt condemn thy heart.

For Me, who warm and zealous for my Friend,
In ſpite of railing thouſands, will commend,
And, no leſs warm and zealous 'gainſt my foes,
Spite of commending thouſands, will oppoſe,
I dare thy worſt, with ſcorn behold thy rage,
But with an eye of Pity view thy Age,
Thy feeble Age, in which, as in a glaſs,
We ſee how Men to diſſolution paſs.
Thou *wretched Being*, whom, on Reaſon's plan,
So chang'd, ſo loſt, I cannot call a Man,
What could perſuade Thee, at this time of life,
To launch afreſh into the Sea of Strife?
Better for Thee, ſcarce crawling on the earth,
Almoſt as much a child as at thy birth,
To have reſign'd in peace thy parting breath,
And ſunk unnoticed in the arms of Death.
Why would thy grey grey hairs reſentment brave,
Thus to go down with ſorrow to the grave?
Now, by my Soul, it makes me bluſh to know
My Spirits could deſcend to ſuch a foe.

Whatever cauſe the vengeance might provoke,
It ſeems rank Cowardice to give the ſtroke.

Sure 'tis a curſe which angry Fates impoſe,
To mortify man's arrogance, that Thoſe
Who're faſhion'd of ſome better ſort of clay,
Much ſooner than the common herd decay.
What bitter pangs muſt humbled GENIUS feel,
In their laſt hours, to view a SWIFT and STEELE?
How muſt ill-boding horrors fill her breaſt,
When She beholds Men, mark'd above the reſt
For qualities moſt dear, plung'd from that height,
And ſunk, deep ſunk, in ſecond Childhood's night?
Are Men, indeed, ſuch things, and are the beſt
More ſubject to this evil, than the reſt,
To drivel out whole years of Ideot breath,
And ſit the Monuments of living Death?
O, galling circumſtance to human pride!
Abaſing Thought, but not to be denied!
With curious Art the Brain too finely wrought,
Preys on herſelf, and is deſtroy'd by Thought.
Conſtant Attention wears the active mind,
Blots out her pow'rs, and leaves a blank behind.

But let not Youth, to infolence allied,
In heat of blood, in full career of pride,
Poſſeſs'd of GENIUS, with unhallow'd rage
Mock the infirmities of rev'rend age.
The greateſt GENIUS to this Fate may bow;
REYNOLDS, in time, may be like HOGARTH now.

FINIS.